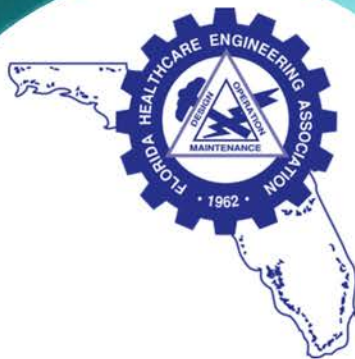


THE WHISTLE

FLORIDA HEALTHCARE ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

John Newman
CHE, CHSP



Spring is here! I have to say this was one of the coldest winters I remember in my 21 years living in Florida. And, as Healthcare Facility Engineers in this state, we usually focus our attention on reducing both temperature and humidity levels in our facilities, but only a couple of months ago many of us were faced with the opposite challenge. With outside air temperatures in the 20's and dew points hovering around 10F, we suddenly found ourselves relying on humidification strategies versus our typical dehumidification needs. Through conversations with some of our members, it is safe to say that many of us had to be creative and resourceful in order to deliver and maintain a safe and compliant physical environment within our facilities while experiencing these types of weather conditions.

This is just another example that demonstrates the day-to-day challenges we can face as Healthcare Facility Engineers and highlights the need for us to position our teams to be ready for whatever comes our way. This is also an example of how FHEA brings value to its members by offering continuing education, networking, and access to other resources that can help prepare us for these types of scenarios and helps us build resilience within our respective programs. But now that Spring is upon us, I believe our freeze stats can enjoy some well-deserved time off!

Our 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Educational Conference, Team Up With FHEA, is just around the corner, May 17-20, at Renaissance Seaworld, Orlando. We have an amazing education agenda lined up, kicking off Tuesday morning with our keynote speaker, Brian Boyle, and wrapping up Wednesday afternoon with a very important Physical Environment update from Jim Grana with The Joint Commission. *(Continued on next page)*

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FHEA Board of Directors: 30

2026 FHEA Trade Show & Education Conference

May 17 - 20



REGISTER NOW!

President's Message Continued

Opportunities to engage in valuable networking with our members will include our golf tournament at Omni Championsgate on Monday, May 18th, our Welcome Reception that evening, our Trade Show Tuesday and Wednesday, as well as our Classic Casino Dinner & Party Tuesday evening. We will also be hosting an RFA (Responsible Facility Authority) training class on Tuesday, May 19th. I look forward to seeing everyone there.

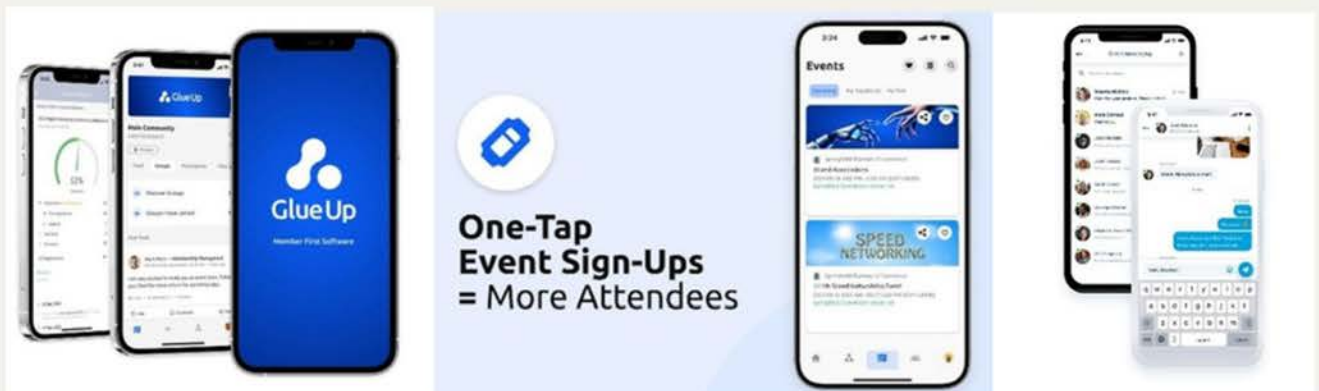
At our annual meeting, we will also be bringing in our new state officers for the upcoming year. It has been an honor to serve as FHEA state president for the past year and during this time, I have developed a renewed sense of gratitude for our organization and everyone who has helped form it into what it is today. This begins with our previous leaders and members and extends to everyone involved to this date including full, associate, student, life, and supporting members. I'd like to thank our past and current Board members for their leadership which requires both courage and forward-thinking as we strive to continue to adapt to an evolving industry while also remaining aligned with our mission. I'd also like to thank Sarah, Marty, Mike, and the rest of the MMG team at the state office for all of their hard work that goes on behind the scenes for our organization. Looking forward to everything we will accomplish in the future.

WELCOME TO GLUEUP & INTRODUCING THE FHEA CONNECT APP

Sarah Jeffcoat, Executive Director, FHEA

The Florida Healthcare Engineering Association (FHEA) is excited to announce the launch of our new association management platform—GlueUp—along with our brand-new mobile app, FHEA Connect. This upgraded system serves as a centralized hub for all FHEA activities, designed to enhance both efficiency and the overall member experience. From membership management to event engagement, everything you need is now in one place—and accessible anytime, anywhere.

Take FHEA With You – Download the App



(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)

WELCOME TO GLUEUP & INTRODUCING THE FHEA CONNECT APP

(Continued)

With the FHEA Connect mobile app, you can:

- Register for events quickly and easily
- Access your membership profile and renewal status
- View event schedules and receive real-time updates
- Network with fellow members through messaging and directory features
- Track your continuing education (CE) credits

👉 Download the app:

- iOS: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/fhea-connect/id6758319581>
- Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.glueup.wl.fhea>

🚀 What This Means for You

The transition to GlueUp introduces several powerful tools to better serve our members:

- Streamlined Membership Management
- Automated applications and renewals make it easier to stay active and engaged.
- Enhanced Event Experience
- Register, access agendas, and stay informed—all in one place.
- Integrated Communications
- Receive important announcements and updates directly from FHEA.
- Continuing Education Tracking
- Easily monitor your CE credits for certifications and professional development.

🔒 Stay Connected

To ensure you receive all FHEA communications, please ask your IT department to whitelist email addresses ending in @fhea.org and @glueup.com.

We are excited to bring you a more connected, efficient, and user-friendly experience. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at sarah@fhea.org.

We look forward to serving you better with GlueUp and the FHEA Connect app!

An Important Message about RFA:

R F A

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) released the 2021 Healthcare Facilities Code, often referred to as NFPA 2021/99. The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) adopted this code on December 31, 2023 (69A-3.012 : Standards of the National Fire Protection Association and Other Standards Adopted - Florida Administrative Rules, Law, Code, Register - FAC, FAR, eRulemaking). This code covers many pertinent regulatory requirements to be followed by hospital engineers.

This article will focus on the NFPA 2021/99 5.1.14.2, the obligations of the responsible facility authority (RFA). This term, RFA, is new to this edition and carries significant responsibilities in an effort to keep the medical gas systems safe and operational. The RFA is required to have knowledge of the system and have acceptable qualifications to hold this position. Within the medical gas systems, the RFA will;

1. Perform risk assessments
2. Upkeep the emergency plan
3. Ensure emergency plan addresses medical gas issues
4. Enforce permit-to-work program
5. Evaluate test reports
6. Maintain facility records

These responsibilities are in place to ensure a safe medical gas system is in place at all times. Given this is now being reviewed by the regulatory authorities, the FHEA Board has approved majority funding of education for perspective RFA's. The 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference, May 17-20, will provide this educational opportunity at a significantly reduced rate.

I encourage all FHEA members to attend this event/class to obtain the necessary knowledge and credentials. This education requires both on-site and additional remote learning work be completed after the conference. Nearly \$500 per learner is being funded by FHEA. Looking forward to learning together and ensuring a safer environment for our patients in the free state of Florida.

Register now for the conference and the class - the first 70 attendees receive the lowest price possible, <https://www.fhea.org/2026-annual-meeting>.

Bobby Baird, FASHE
FHEA Treasurer and Past President

2026 FHEA TRADE SHOW & EDUCATION CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION**REGISTER HERE >****REGISTRATION FEES:**

- Active Healthcare Member: \$225
- CHE Member: \$205
- Supporting Member: \$475
- Expo Booth Rep: \$400 (up to 3 per booth; 1 comp)
- Non-member: \$575
- Life Member: Comp
- Spouse: \$149 (includes one drink ticket, dinner, and the casino party on Tuesday night)

For members and healthcare industry attendees, the basic registration fees include the cost and the functions for which no extra charge is indicated on the registration form for the regular conference.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Renaissance Sea World
6677 Sea Harbor Drive
Orlando, FL 32821
800-380-7917

Hotel rooms for the upcoming 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference, May 17-20th, at Renaissance Sea World Resort in Orlando are \$209 plus tax.

Internet

Complimentary basic wi-fi for Bonvoy members is available in guestrooms and public space, so if you are not a member, sign up now,

<https://www.marriott.com/loyalty/createAccount/createAccountPage1.mi>

Parking at the Renaissance

Self-parking will be complimentary (5/17 – 5/20, 2026) for overnight guests who have booked within the FHEA block. For those driving in and not staying in the hotel, self-parking, with in and out privileges, will be 50% off the current daily fee (\$36.00).

IMPORTANT HOTEL NOTICE

Do NOT make room reservations for the 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Educational Conference with any third party claiming to represent FHEA/Florida Healthcare Engineering Association OR offering discounted rates at the Renaissance Sea World Resort. The ONLY legitimate way to reserve your room is through the official booking link or by calling 800-380-7917.

2026 FHEA TRADE SHOW & EDUCATION CONFERENCE

FHEA KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Brian Boyle



Brian Boyle, keynote speaker for the 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference, will deliver a powerful and inspiring presentation you won't want to miss.

In 2004, Brian survived a devastating automobile accident that resulted in catastrophic injuries and a two-month medically induced coma. Miraculously, through extensive surgeries and rehabilitation, he made a remarkable recovery and went on to become an Ironman athlete and advocate for resilience and blood donation.

Brian's presentation, "The Patient Experience," explores how hospital design, layout, and clinical engineering directly impact patient care, safety, and the overall experience of patients and their families.

RFA TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

What's an RFA? Raw Florida Amphibians? Radio Frequency Attenuation? Rowdy Flamingo Association?

Nope! The RFA is the Responsible Facility Authority – the individual accountable in your hospital for operation and management of a facility's piped medical gas and vacuum systems.

The 2021 edition of the NFPA 99 formally designates the RFA role, including responsibility for risk management, emergency planning, documentation, and the brand-new permit-to-work process that protects patients during repairs, shutdowns, and construction. If your facility relies on piped medical gases, having an RFA with verified competence is no longer best practice; it's a requirement.

This hybrid program includes the 2-hour in-person session at the 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference, followed by 8-hours of asynchronous online modules completed at the attendee's convenience.

Additional registration fees will be required if you want to register for the 2-hour RFA training. The fee for the first 70 FHEA healthcare active members, who have registered for the regular conference, will be \$100.

2026 FHEA TRADE SHOW & ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2026

(as of April 10, 2026)

5:00 -
6:30pm

Huddle Up Welcome Reception (Cash Bar)

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026

7:00am

FHEA Golf Tournament at Omni Chapionsgate [*\(separate registration required\)*](#)

5:00 -
6:30pm

Meet n Greet Pre-game Welcome Reception

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026

7:00am -
3:00pm

FHEA Trade Show Exhibitors Set Up

7:00am

Kickoff Continental Breakfast

8:00 -
8:15am

Welcome and Part 1: Annual Meeting
John Newman, FHEA President

8:15 -
9:15am

Keynote Speaker: Brian Boyle
The Patient Experience

9:15 -
9:45am

Timeout Break & Meet n Greet with Brian Boyle

9:45 -
10:45am

General Session: Lifecycle of an Air Handler
Hank Nirider and Todd Jones; SSR
Lucien Hornbuckle; HCA

10:45 -
11:45am

General Session: Leveraging AI to Drive Energy Efficiency in HVA Systems
Nelson Wong; Aquanomix

(as of April 10, 2026)

TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026

11:45am - 12:45pm	Halftime Networking Lunch
12:45 - 1:45pm	Breakout #1: Operating Room Space Condition Control: Challenges & Strategies Edgard Niebles, Memorial Regional South; Sri Iyer, Trane
<u>OR</u>	
12:45 - 1:45pm	Breakout #2: From Study to Strategy: What Hospitals Can Learn about CHP & Microgrids Tony Echazabal, Cleveland Clinic; Michael Bower, Envivity
1:45 - 4:00pm	RFA Training/Certification (2-hour class with limited availability & an additional registration fee) Adam Quirk & Wes Reed, Lantern Medical, LLC
<u>OR</u>	
1:45 - 2:45pm	ST108: What's Next? How AAMI TIR119 Will Help Hospitals Overcome the Real-World Challenges of ST108 Implementation Len Sparks, VERDA Water Quality Systems
2:45 - 3:00pm	Seventh Inning Stretch Break for all course attendees
3:00 - 4:00pm	From Crunch to Contamination Jess Hartman, Tristen Williams; Finsen Tech
4:00 - 7:00pm	Fanfest 2026 FHEA Trade Show Open
7:00 - 10:30pm	FHEA Classic Casino Dinner & Party



(as of April 10, 2026)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2026

7:00am	Fuel Your Game Continental Breakfast
8:00 - 10:00am	NFPA 101 Jim Peterkin, TLC Engineering
10:00am - 1:00pm	Fanfest FHEA Trade Show Open, Intermission Trade Show Break, & Follow the Team Door Prize Crawl
1:00 - 2:00pm	Victory Lap Lunch
2:00 - 2:15pm	Part 2: Annual Business Meeting
2:15 - 4:15pm	Accreditation 360 - Physical Environment Update (Vizient Southeast Update) Jim Grana, The Joint Commission

The FHEA reserves the right to change speakers, topics, and or scheduling due to unforeseen circumstances.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Join us for the 2026 Annual FHEA Golf Tournament at Omni Championsgate Golf Course on Monday, May 18. Registration begins at 7:00 a.m. - a grab-and-go breakfast will be available. The tournament will kick off at 8:00 a.m. with a shotgun start, followed by an awards luncheon at the conclusion of play. Don't miss this great opportunity to network and connect with professionals in the healthcare engineering industry. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information visit

<https://www.cognitofirms.com/FloridaHealthcareEngineeringAssociation/2026FHEAAnnualGolfScrambleSponsorshipRegistration>

2026 FHEA ANNUAL SPONSORS

HALL OF FAME

BELFOR
Spirax Sarco Inc.

LEGEND

Harper Limbach
Pyure Dynamic Protection

CHAMPION

EOLA Power
Green Air Environmental of
Central Florida

ALL-STAR

BMS CAT
Environmental Diversified Services
Fellowes, Air Quality Management
First Onsite
Grainger
HEAPY
ICT I Salas O'Brien
Netplanner
Sutter Roofing
The Garland Company, Inc.
Thermal Concepts
Thermal Tech Inc.
TLC Engineering Solutions
TUV Rheinland
Yorkshire Commercial Interiors

CONTENDER

Absolute Water Technologies
ASSA ABLOY Entrance Systems US, Inc.
BluSky Restoration Contractors
ChemTreat, Inc.
Commercial Door Worx
Cummins Inc.
Emerald Engineering, Inc.
Evergreen Medical Services
FacilityConneX
Florida Power & Light
Forbo Flooring Systems
Georgia Time Recorder-dba GTR
Business Systems
LSS Life Safety Services
Prime Power Services, Inc.
PUREFLOW INC.
Ring Power Corporation
SOPREMA
Stark Tech
Translogic Corporation a Division of
Swisslog Healthcare
Tremco Roofing & Building Maintenance

ROOKIE

Andrews Filter & Supply
Aquanomix
C.L.Burks Commercial Roofing
Carolina Filter Supply
Envinity, Building Energy Solutions
FlorTech
Hexmodal
Imperial Privacy Systems LLC
Lantern Medical
National Firestopping Solutions

EVENT SPONSORS

FSI - MVP Keynote speaker
C.A. Mechanical - Coach's Dinner
Florida Natural Gas Association - Coach's Dinner
Health Choice Enterprises, LLC - Pre-Game Meet n Greet
Premier Water & Energy Technology - Pre-Game Meet n Greet
Echo Power - Halftime Lunch
Trident - Thirsty Fan Trade Show Drink Tickets
Paladin Healthcare LLC - Fan Fest Trade Show Entertainment
SERVPRO Team George - Classic Casino Party

INFORMATION >>

EVENT SPONSORSHIPS - STILL TIME TO SIGN UP

Options include receptions, breakfasts, breaks, speaker sponsorships, entertainment, and more. Each includes specific registration benefits and recognition.

2026 FHEA ANNUAL EXHIBITORS

360 Energy Solutions
 AAF International
 Absolute Water Technologies
 Advanced Roofing
 Affiliated Steam & Hot Water
 Air Source Corporation
 AirX Inc.
 Albireo Energy
 All Florida Mechanical Services, LLC.
 Allegion Access Technologies LLC
 American Portable Air, Inc.
 Analytical & Combustion Systems
 Anchor Mechanical Inc.
 Andrews Filter & Supply Corp.
 Aquanomix
 ASC - Engineered Solutions
 Ashberry Water Conditioning
 ASSA ABLOY Entrance Systems US, Inc.
 Avid Services
 BeaconMedaes
 BELFOR
 Bender Inc.
 Bevara Building Services
 BluSky Restoration Contractors
 BMS CAT
 Boiler Technologies Unlimited, LLC
 Bray Commercial Division
 Brooks Building Solutions
 C.A.R.E. Cleaning And Restoration
 Experts
 C.L. Burks Commercial Roofing
 Carolina Filter Supply
 Carrier Rental Systems
 ChemTreat, Inc.
 ChillMaster
 Coastal Mechanical Services LLC
 Coastline Power Solutions
 Colombo
 Commercial Door Worx
 Comprehensive Energy Services, Inc.
 Concentric LLC
 Convergent
 CRx Compliance
 C-Sharpe Co., LLC
 Cummins, Inc.
 DETEX

Door Specialties, Inc.
 Duct Dynasty Clean Air LLC
 Duro-Last
 Edge Construction
 EMCOR Mechanical Services of
 Central Florida
 Envinity, Building Energy Solutions
 Environmental Diversified Services
 EOLA Power
 EVCOR USA, LLC.
 Evergreen Medical Services
 Everon
 FacilityConneX
 Fellowes
 First Onsite
 Florida Power & Light
 FlorTech
 Fluid Systems and Controls
 Follett Products, LLC
 Forbo Flooring Systems
 GHP, Inc
 Grainger
 Green Air Environmental of Central
 Florida
 GTR Business Systems
 Harper Limbach
 Heapy
 Hepacart, Inc.
 Hexmodal
 HydroCorp
 ICT | Salas O'Brien
 Idn Armstrongs
 Imperial Privacy Systems LLC
 Industrial Engineering
 Inpro Corporation
 Integrated Cooling Solutions
 Integrity Pressure Cleaning
 Jeron Electronic Systems, Inc.
 JLL, Healthcare powered by ATG
 Intelligence
 Ketchum & Walton Co.
 Kimley-Horn and Associates
 Knight Commercial
 Kurita America, Inc.
 Lantern Academy
 Life Safety Enterprises Inc.
 Life Safety Services
 LiquiTech

Mainscape Inc.
 McWane Plumbing Group
 Miracle Method
 Modern Containment Systems
 Momar, Inc
 Nabco Entrances, Inc.
 Nabholz Construction Corp.
 Nalco Water - Ecolab
 National Firestopping Solutions
 NetPlanner Systems, Inc.
 Otis Elevator
 Our Fresh Air, Inc
 Owen Ames Kimball Co.
 Painters on Demand
 Paladin Healthcare LLC
 Paradise Filter Supply
 Pathway Technologies
 Pevco
 POLYGLASS USA INC
 Prime Power Services, Inc.
 Primex, Inc.
 PUREFLOW INC
 Pyure Dynamic Protection
 re:fab
 Remedi8
 Remediation Specialists
 Ring Power Corporation
 RMS Roofing and Waterproofing
 Consulting
 S & K Services
 Schaefer General Contracting
 Schneider Electric
 SERVPRO Team Cuthbertson
 SESCO Lighting
 Sherwin-Williams
 SOPREMA
 Southeast Coil Pro, LLC
 Southwest Elevator
 Specified Technologies, Inc.
 SPIRAX SARCO INC
 SSR
 STARC Systems
 Stark Tech
 STRUCTURAL

- Summit Fire National Accounts
- Sutter Roofing
- Tank Wizards Inc
- Tecta America Roofing
- Terracon Consultants, Inc.
- The Davey Tree Expert Company
- The Garland Company, Inc.
- Thermal Concepts
- Thermal Tech Inc
- Thornton Tomasetti, Inc.
- TLC Engineering Solutions
- Trane
- Translogic Corporation a Division of Swisslog Healthcare
- Tremco Roofing and Building Maintenance
- TÜV Rheinland
- Unison Energy, LLC
- UVCADS, LLC ELECTRONICS GROUP
- Valcourt Building Services
- Verda
- Victaulic
- Walker Consultants, Inc.
- Wash Me Fly
- Weather Shield Roofing Systems
- Western Specialty Contractors
- Yellowstone Landscape
- Yorkshore Commercial Interiors
- Yown's Boiler Service & Furnace Service, LLC
- Zurn Elkay Water Solutions



COMING SOON



Exhibit and sponsorship opportunities for the **2026 FHEA Fall Expo & Education Conference**,

November 7 – 10, at the Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village, will be available soon. Tabletops will be limited, so you won't want to miss out when registration opens.

Watch for details!



American Society for Health Care Engineering (ASHE) 2026 Q1



Edgard Niebles, MBA, CHC, CHE, CHFM, CHSP, LSSGB
ASHE Liaison



A strong chapter performance, active member engagement, and continued professional development are essential to advancing healthcare engineering in the year ahead.

A key focus remains achieving and sustaining Platinum and Platinum Elite Chapter status, with emphasis on documenting achievements and aligning initiatives with ASHE's strategic priorities. For the Florida Healthcare Engineering Association (FHEA), this aligns with our ongoing commitment to excellence and national recognition.

Membership engagement continues to be a top priority. ASHE highlighted the importance of not only growing membership but ensuring meaningful involvement through education, networking, and leadership opportunities. Expanding access to certifications such as CHFM and CHC, along with hosting local educational sessions, remains critical to developing the next generation of healthcare facility leaders.

Sustainability also remains at the forefront through ASHE's Energy to Care program, encouraging facilities to track and improve energy performance while contributing to broader organizational goals.

Additionally, ASHE emphasized the importance of effective communication and social media strategy to increase visibility, share successes, and strengthen member connections. Collaboration across chapters was also encouraged as a way to share best practices and drive innovation nationwide.

Looking ahead, one of the most anticipated events is the ASHE Health Care Facilities Innovation Conference 2026, taking place August 2–5, 2026, at the Convention Center in Minneapolis. This premier event brings together healthcare facility leaders from across the country to share insights, explore innovations, and advance the future of the built healthcare environment.

As we move through 2026, FHEA remains well-positioned to lead, engage, and continue setting the standard for excellence within the ASHE community.

I will see you all in May at the FHEA Annual Conference. I welcome you to engage with me if you want to find out more about ASHE and how it supports FHEA and our continued vision to bring meaningful education to our members.

THE NEW RFA REQUIREMENT: WHAT IT MEANS FOR FLORIDA HOSPITALS — AND WHY THIS YEAR'S FHEA CONFERENCE MATTERS



John Crouch, CHFM, CHOP (A)
Chair, FHEA Education Committee

Hospitals rely on medical gas systems every minute of every day. These systems support critical care, surgical services, emergency response, and routine clinical operations. With the 2021 edition of NFPA 99, hospitals now face a major shift: Every facility must designate a Responsible Facility Authority (RFA) a qualified individual accountable for the safe operation, maintenance, and oversight of the medical gas and vacuum systems.

This requirement is reshaping how Florida hospitals structure compliance, training, and risk management.

WHY THE RFA ROLE IS ESSENTIAL

A Direct Impact on Patient Safety

Medical gas failures are rare but high-consequence events. The RFA ensures that shutdowns, tie-ins, repairs, and construction activities follow a controlled, documented process that protects patients and staff.

Surveyors Are Already Asking for It

Accrediting bodies and AHCA want to see:

- A formally designated RFA
- Documented competency
- A defined permit-to-work process
- Updated drawings and risk assessments

Hospitals without these elements risk findings and corrective action plans.

Competency Is Now Mandatory

NFPA 99 requires the RFA to be qualified. This means understanding system components, code requirements, emergency procedures, and the new permit-to-work process. It's not a role that can be assigned casually.

Education Spotlight: (Continued)

HOW HOSPITALS CAN PREPARE

- Designate the RFA in writing, typically a facility manager, senior technician, or clinical engineering leader.
- Provide structured training that covers NFPA 99, system components, documentation, and risk management.
- Develop a repeatable program including annual risk assessments, updated drawings, contractor oversight, and shutdown planning.

A strong RFA program improves safety, reduces survey risk, and strengthens coordination across engineering, construction, and clinical teams.

WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE 2026 FHEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference offers the most accessible and comprehensive RFA training opportunity available in Florida. The hybrid RFA Training & Certification Program includes a two-hour in-person session at the conference and eight hours of online modules completed at your convenience.

Key Benefits

- Cost-effective training: The first 70 active healthcare members receive the full RFA program for just \$100.
- Survey-aligned content: The course directly addresses the NFPA 99 requirements surveyors are now enforcing.
- Expert instructors: Adam Quirk and Wes Reed bring real-world experience in medical gas systems and compliance.
- Broader education: Sessions on air handler lifecycle management, AI-driven HVAC optimization, OR humidity control, infection prevention, and more strengthen every part of the facility engineer's role.
- Community and collaboration: Networking events, the trade show, and this year's keynote on The Patient Experience make the conference both educational and energizing.

FINAL THOUGHT

The RFA requirement is here, and hospitals that act now will be safer, more compliant, and better prepared for the next survey cycle. The 2026 FHEA Conference provides the training, resources, and peer support needed to build a strong, sustainable RFA program.

This is the year to get it right and FHEA is the place to do it. Register now for the upcoming 2026 FHEA Trade Show & Annual Education Conference, May 17 – 20, at the Renaissance Sea World, <https://www.fhea.org/2026-annual-meeting>

More Than Sessions and Exhibits: The Hidden Value of Conference Participation



Jeff Howard, MBA, CHFM, CHE
Chair, FHEA Membership Committee

As we prepare for FHEA's Annual Conference and Trade Show, many members look at the calendar and think, "I've been before." It's an understandable reaction—especially for long-time members who have attended multiple conferences over the years.

But that familiarity can cause us to overlook what makes this event valuable year after year. While the format may feel familiar, the experience—and the value—changes every time, because our profession continues to evolve.

The FHEA Annual Conference is one of the few opportunities each year where Florida's healthcare engineering community comes together to share, learn, and connect in ways that simply can't be replicated in our day-to-day work. Educational sessions provide important updates, regulatory insight, and fresh perspectives. Yet many of the most meaningful takeaways happen between sessions—through conversations with peers facing similar challenges.

Attendees often leave with something unexpected: a new approach to a familiar issue, a different way of thinking about compliance or infrastructure risk, or a professional connection that becomes a trusted resource long after the conference ends. These moments aren't always on the agenda, but they frequently deliver the greatest return.

The FHEA Trade Show also offers more than product displays. It provides opportunities for direct conversations with solution providers who understand healthcare environments and can speak candidly about what is working—and what isn't—in facilities like yours.

Those discussions often lead to ideas that support operational efficiency, risk reduction, and long-term planning.

For experienced professionals, the conference offers valuable perspective. Even familiar challenges look different when viewed through the lens of changing regulations, workforce pressures, and increasing system complexity. Engaging with peers helps us validate our approaches, learn from others, and stay connected to how the profession is responding statewide.

Equally important is the role seasoned members play by simply being present. Newer professionals benefit greatly from seeing experienced leaders engaged, learning alongside them, and contributing to shared discussions. That informal mentorship strengthens both the association and the future of healthcare engineering.

The Annual Conference is where FHEA membership comes to life—through shared experience, meaningful dialogue, and professional connection. Even if you've been before, the conversations will be different, the challenges will be different, and the value you take away will be different.

I encourage each of you to look at this year's conference not as a repeat, but as an opportunity to reconnect, reengage, and rediscover the value of being part of FHEA.

More about FHEA Membership

- [View Membership webpage](#)
- [FHEA Info Video](#)

FHEA Sustainability



Phil Cardone, CHFM, CHC, CHE
Chair, FHEA Sustainability Chair

The FHEA Sustainability Committee is pleased to announce that five healthcare facilities across Florida are actively participating in the ASHE Energy to Care™ Chapter Challenge, reinforcing our chapter's ongoing leadership in energy efficiency, benchmarking, and sustainability.

Participating facilities include:

- Baptist Hospital (Pensacola)
- Baptist Medical Center – Beaches, Wilson Epstein Building (Jacksonville)
- Baptist Medical Center – Jacksonville, Outpatient Center (Jacksonville)
- UF Health – Shands South Campus (Gainesville)
- UF Health – Psychiatric Hospital (Gainesville)
-

Through the Chapter Challenge, participating facilities benchmark and compare weather-normalized source Energy Use Intensity (EUI) over a 12-month period. FHEA will compete in the Small Chapter category, with the winning chapter determined by the greatest percentage reduction in energy use during the challenge period. High-performing chapters receive national recognition at the ASHE Health Care Facility Innovation Conference (HCFIC) and an award to share with chapter members.

Together, the five facilities generated \$571,223 in energy cost reductions during 2024 and 2025, reflecting the value of consistent benchmarking and energy management efforts.

Participation in the Energy to Care™ Chapter Challenge also advances FHEA's recognition from ASHE Platinum to Platinum Elite status. This distinction reflects sustained engagement in energy data transparency, performance improvement, and alignment with ASHE's national sustainability initiatives—placing FHEA among ASHE's top recognized chapters.

Facilities interested in participating in the ASHE Energy to Care™ Program, submitting benchmarking data, or joining future Chapter Challenges are encouraged to get involved.

Energy to Care™ is a trademark of the American Society for Health Care Engineering (ASHE) of the American Hospital Association.



FHEA WOMEN IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES (WoFac)

The Florida Healthcare Engineering Association (FHEA) is pleased to announce the formation of a new committee, **Women in Healthcare Facilities.**

The purpose of this committee is “to navigate and create an environment for the professional development of women in the healthcare facilities industry; to enhance the lives of its members by aligning with the FHEA bylaws and values, operational models, and educational efforts; and to foster partnerships with community organizations while promoting work-life balance through organized committee events.”

Cecily Allen will serve as Committee Chair. Others serving on the leadership team include Mouji Linarez, Margaret Jazinski, Tracey Gallentine, Glynn Sieglar, and Aileen Rodriguez.

One of the community groups WoFac will serve is Women In Distress. Opportunities, which are subject to change, include back to school drives, Thanksgiving food collection, December party & toy drive for children, and other events.

Watch for more details coming soon about a networking Meet n Greet at the upcoming FHEA conference and how you can become involved in this exciting new initiative.



SAVE THE DATE! 2026 FALL EXPO

"Make Waves in Healthcare Engineering & Facility Management"



**2026 FHEA FALL EXPO & EDUCATION
CONFERENCE**

November 7 - 10  Westin Cape Coral

CONNECT. LEARN. LEAD.

FHEA 2026 FHEA FALL EXPO & EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE: CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS - DUE MAY 30, 2026

You are invited to submit a presentation for the 2026 FHEA Fall Expo & Educational Conference, November 7 - 10, at the Westin in Cape Coral. The FHEA is committed to delivering balanced, high-quality programming that represents the broad spectrum of perspectives within the healthcare engineering and facility management industry. Preference will be given to sessions that promote constructive dialogue, practical learning, and real-world application.

Submissions will ONLY be considered if all required documents are included in the application. Presentations should be generic in nature and must not be an advertisement for a particular company. Please remember: the FHEA does not cover any speaker costs or expenses; however, speakers do receive a discounted registration price.

Complete information and the application to submit a presentation can be found at www.fhea.org

Click on Resources, then Forms in the dropdown menu.

2026 GOLD TOUCHSTONE RECIPIENT: UF HEALTH NORTH INPATIENT TOWER

Gresham Smith

Seeking to bring much-needed health care services to the growing North Jacksonville, FL area, UF Health developed a full-service, 160,000-square-foot, five-story, 92-bed inpatient hospital designed to enhance patient experience and attract both patients and top-tier staff.

To create a hospital that cares for both caregiver and patient, evidence-based design principles informed project plans that fostered staff collaboration, restorative breaks, and family-engaged patient care. The design team focused on creating an economically sustainable facility that eliminated departmental barriers, thereby reducing staff redundancy and increasing efficiency. The hospital achieved magnet status.

HFMmagazine.com
Spring 2026

USING DRONES TO HELP WITH HEALTHCARE FACILITIES OPERATIONS

Harnessing drone technology allows access of roofs and parking lots and shows problem areas to the executive leadership when there is a need of capital for repairs or improvements. Drones fly over all buildings for roof inspections and parking lot landscaping assessments.

This technology is also used for building construction projects to record progress and show the work to hospital governing boards, executive leadership, and staff. For some projects, drones are flown every two weeks from site clearing to dry-in, once a month until paving and landscaping start, and then ramped up to three days per week to show changes and progress.

This approach is well-received by leadership and staff. It also provides better knowledge of the building than still photos captured from standing on a roof or parking lot that show only a portion of the area where repairs are needed.

HFMmagazine.com
Spring 2026

LEE HEALTH FORT MYERS HOSPITAL: RIGHT-SIZED, RESILIENT, AND READY

Lee Health's new health care destination campus aims to provide accessible, best-in-class health care while accommodating future growth and evolving community health needs. The system's first new hospital in decades, Fort Myers Hospital, is strategically placed in the community to provide better clinical access to patients in a state-of-the-art care environment.

Lee Health worked with Flad Architects to define necessary services based on community needs and right-size the program and space to support those services. Process improvement anchored every discussion, helping the team focus on creating a facility that supports next-practice care models rather than replicating current workflows.

Spanning more than 690,000 square feet, the campus will house a full-service hospital, ancillary and social services, neurological and surgical optimization clinics, and a medical office building (MOB) supporting the Lee Health Musculoskeletal Institute and outpatient surgery center.

The devastation from Hurricane Ian – which made landfall on the southwest Florida coast during the week schematic design was originally intended to begin - led the team to implement lessons learned into the planning of the new facility. Resilient design measures include raising critical infrastructure above code-required thresholds, elevating staff parking areas to prevent widespread flooding of cars, and incorporating enhanced water systems to sustain care during prolonged outages.

HFMmagazine.com
Spring 2026

CMS REQUIRING FULLY SPRINKLERED HIGH-RISES

Existing high-rise health care occupancies, deemed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, must be fully sprinklered by July 5, 2028. This requirement includes high-rise buildings that contain health care and other types of occupancies. Leah Hummel, AIA, CHFM, CHC, CHOP, SASHE, ASHE Senior Associate Director for Regulatory Affairs, urges that facilities start planning now. A project of this size requires significant investment in time, costs, and personnel, and it can take months or even years to complete.

HFMmagazine.com
Spring 2026

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FHEA APPRECIATES OUR SUPPORTING MEMBER EXHIBITORS AND SPONSORS

The Florida Healthcare Engineering Association (FHEA) sincerely appreciates our Supporting Members who exhibit at our events—both at the state level and within our district meetings. Your participation not only contributes valuable time and expertise but also strengthens connections across the healthcare engineering and facility management community.

We value the partnerships we've built and believe they lead to meaningful relationships and long-term collaboration. FHEA is committed to creating a focused environment at all events where healthcare professionals and Supporting Members can connect, exchange ideas, and share industry insights. Face-to-face interaction provides opportunities for collaboration that simply can't be replicated through email or phone conversations.

FHEA attendees are leaders and decision-makers within their facilities, making it essential for them to stay informed about the latest equipment, technologies, and services. By attending the FHEA Trade Show, participating in educational sessions, and engaging in networking opportunities, all participants can build valuable connections and remain current in an ever-evolving industry.

We also encourage exhibitors and sponsors to take full advantage of the educational sessions offered during the conference. At our state meetings, Continuing Education (CE) credits are available through ASHE, as well as for Florida Professional Engineers, Architects, and Interior Designers, so don't miss this valuable opportunity.

We look forward to seeing you in Orlando, May 17–20!

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FHEA DISTRICT LEADERSHIP FOR 2026

BECOME MORE INVOLVED IN THE FHEA BY TAKING PART IN DISTRICT ACTIVITIES.
TO LEARN MORE, VISIT THE DISTRICT PAGES ON WWW.FHEA.ORG.

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